

ESCAPES FROM SING SING.

ONCE UPON A TIME THEY WERE EASIER THAN THEY ARE NOWADAYS.

The Prisoners in the Watch Towers are a Great Hindrance, and There are Other Influences at Peter Jail Breakers.

The large number of attempted escapes from the State Prison at Sing Sing during the past few months has greatly surprised the officials there. None of the attempts proved successful, or to speak more exactly, none of the escaping convicts made escape for more than a few hours. None reached the great city of New York with its multitudinous dives, which is the Mecca of all felons who break jail, and which many years ago, proved the effective hiding place of many an outlawed convict.

The attempts have, however, set the prison folks to gossipping about old times, and the residents of Sing Sing to recalling escapes of years ago, which at the time thrilled the town and made nervous householders double-bar their doors of nights for a month afterward. A feature of the recent attempted escapes which is commented upon is that the old dummy game, worked so successfully under a former administration, was revived in two instances. In two other instances convicts took advantage of the practice of putting long-time men at work outside the prison walls to make off and break for the woods. Both are old schemes, which once were fruitful of success to daring men.

Sing Sing prison is not new what it once was. Twenty years ago under Warden Walker, its territory was three times as great as now, and it had no wall. The greater portion of the building stood then, but the unventilated halls by the rear road track were the chief working, and the principal occupation of the convicts was black rock. The men were taken out in gangs, each manager in charge of an armed guard, but there were a plenty of opportunities afforded to a daring man to slink under cover of the bushes and high grass, and in low lull, he found the chance to break for the woods. The convict who planned escape in this way sometimes facilitated things by resorting to the dummy game, also. Going out to work in the morning he would leave the bedchamber of his couch in the corridor, and the door of his cell was left open, so that it would appear from the corridor that a man was sleeping there. A guard would then be sent to the dummy, and the guard's name was Whitey Bob's Kid.

Whitey Bob's Kid started down the railroad track a racehorse, a shotgun shot again him, but the man ran away. Whitey Bob's Kid followed downward on the track. He was dead, and the guard who had shot him was black rock. The men were taken out in gangs, each manager in charge of an armed guard, but there were a plenty of opportunities afforded to a daring man to slink under cover of the bushes and high grass, and in low lull, he found the chance to break for the woods. Both are old schemes, which once were fruitful of success to daring men.

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